

NEW SHOREHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Block Island School

December 16, 2013

7:00 p.m.

The New Shoreham School Committee met in open session on Monday, December 16, 2013, in the media center of the Block Island School. Chair William Padien called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. The following members were present: Patricia Doyle, Ann Hall, William Padien, Elizabeth Connor, and Christopher Willi. Robert Hicks was also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes

A motion (Hall, Doyle) to approve the minutes of the meeting held on November 18, 2013, as presented carried with a vote of 3-0; Elizabeth Connor and Christopher Willi were not in attendance.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to approve the executive session minutes of the meeting held on November 18, 2013, as written carried with a vote of 3-0; Mrs. Connor and Mr. Willi were not in attendance.

Reports

William Padien attended the meeting between the Town Council and Interstate Navigation where the ferry schedule was discussed. Some council members were asking for changes that, if adopted, could affect the school's schedule.

Earlier this afternoon the School Committee had a preliminary meeting with the auditors. The draft audit report was accepted and the final report should be available by the end of the week or early next week.

Ann Hall attended last week's workshop for parents and students on the college application process and financial aid. She commended Betty Gomes for an excellent program.

Mr. Hicks stated that there is one structural change in the finance report this month. A new line item was created to cover online courses, which were previously listed in the software line. A motion (Padien, Connor) to accept the finance report through November 30, 2013, as presented carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Hall) to move Block Island School Futures – Schools Visit Report to the end of New Business carried with a vote of 5-0.

Old Business

Mr. Hicks reported that he would like the School Committee's authorization to apply for a Rhode Island Department of Energy grant to support the installation of a 50kW photovoltaic electricity project at the school. It would require a 25 percent school match, estimated at \$58,000. If the grant is awarded it would require a realignment of our reserve funds. A 39.7 kW system with a tracking mechanism will produce approximately 59,950 kWh. Based on our last billing, at

\$0.3942/kWh, the annual savings would be \$23,632. The simple payback for a \$58,000 capital expense is less than 2.5 years. Annual service contracts are not typical on solar installations, but the total service cost for the system, based on a 25-year life expectancy is \$12,000, or less than \$500/year. This is consistent with our experience with the current system. A motion (Padien, Hall) to authorize the superintendent to apply for the energy grant that requires a 25 percent school match and, if awarded, would necessitate a realignment of our reserve funds carried with a vote of 5-0.

New Business

A list of proposed School Committee meeting dates for 2014 was submitted for review. Regular meetings are usually held on the third Monday of each month, but there are conflicts with Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in January, Presidents Day in February, and the spring recess in April. The meetings were proposed for the second Monday for those three months. Mr. Hicks stated that the proposed meeting date in April is the first day of Passover and requested that it be changed. All agreed on Tuesday, April 15. There was also a conflict with the January date and that was switched to Tuesday, January 21. A motion (Padien, Connor) to adopt the list of meeting dates as amended (January 21 and April 15) carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks submitted a memo with a list of items that will have a net increase of \$85,050 in next year's budget. He suggested budget work sessions be held on January 27 and February 3, but Mr. Willi is not available on the 3rd. Because of various scheduling conflicts the budget meetings will be held on January 27 and January 30 at 4:30 p.m. February 3 is a potential date if another work session is needed.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to accept the resignation of Katie Tarpey from her position as teacher assistant and to thank her for her work carried with a vote of 5-0.

Mr. Hicks reported that Kristin Baumann, Sue Gibbons, Kristine Monje, Lauri McTeague, Lisa Stiepoek, Millie Starr, and he visited two schools in Providence on December 5. One was Pleasant View Elementary, a public school that is traditionally organized, but uses blended learning as part of a classroom station rotation that supports the curriculum. The other was Village Green School, a new charter school that opened this year with grades 9 and 10. Online learning provides the foundation of its program with students spending 60 percent of their time online and 40 percent in supportive core instruction coming from online curriculum. Both schools have strong administrative leadership as advocates for the program and spent a lot of time selecting the software. Neither school found that the blended model decreased staff and the elementary school uses many volunteers and support staff as "guides on the side." The model being used at Village Green is not for every student or type of learner and 12 of the 138 original students have turned over since the beginning of the year. The elementary students thought it was fun and the program kept them at a level that was challenging, but not too difficult. Some of the questions raised were how to measure student progress, how to support struggling students, and how to provide diversity for the high school students while dealing with first grade students learning to read. Neither of the schools had a model we could use, but we would develop a vision of what we want blended learning to look like at Block Island School. The discussion will continue at next month's meeting.

Calendar of Events

Mr. Padien pointed out that there are a lot of upcoming home basketball games that could use community support. In addition, the holiday program is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, December 18. The next regular meeting of the School Committee will be held on Tuesday, January 21, 2014.

Correspondence

A letter was received from The Champlin Foundations informing us that we were not chosen to receive a grant this year.

Executive Session

A motion (Padien, Hall) at 8:25 p.m. to go into executive session pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws 42-46-4, 5(a)(2) for contract negotiations carried with a vote of 5-0.

Open Session

A motion (Padien, Connor) at 8:56 p.m. to return to open session carried with a vote of 5-0.

A motion (Padien, Connor) to seal the minutes of the executive session carried with a vote of 5-0.

Adjournment

A motion (Padien, Connor) at 8:56 p.m. to adjourn carried with a vote of 5-0.

Marsha L. Gutierrez, Clerk

Date approved: January 27, 2014